Carrafa-Roselli link probed

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ROCKVILLE — A positive connection may finally have been established between victims of the two gangland-style murders of a Chicago mobster and a Derwood antique car dealer, whose chain-wrapped bodies were discovered earlier this month.

Sources said John Roselli, who had testified once before a Senate committee in relation to his possible participation in CIA attempts to assassinate Cuban leader Fidel Castro, and Eugene (Gino) M. Carrafa, 37, of Derwood, met last spring.

According to sources, the meeting took place in a Chicago motel. Police in at least three states have been investigating the possible connection between the two men in an attempt to establish a motive for their killings, and a link to CIA activities.

Roselli's body was found floating in an oil drum off Biscayne Bay, Fla., about the same time Carrafa's was discovered washed ashore off Staten Island, N.Y., on Aug. 4. Carrafa had been strangled, and his body sunken with chains around his waist. Roselli's body was also found wrapped in chains.

The Organized Crime Unit of Montgomery police was called into the case at the request of New York police. Last week, the FBI admitted that they, too, were investigating Roselli's murder.

Carrafa was the owner of Gino's Classic Cars in Abingdon. His wife, Carol, reported him missing on Aug. 1, and told police that he left for New York on July 28 to visit his partner, Jay Knohl, concerning the purchase of an antique car.

Earlier this week, Knohl's criminal record, including convictions for rape, extortion and policy (numbers), was revealed. Police confirmed that Knohl also has a bodyguard, Robert E. White, known as "Gorilla," who lives with him.

According to New York authorities, White also has a criminal record for bank robbery in 1965. White is a former resident of Rockville, where he lived, in 1968, at 502 Azalea Drive, according to records. The house is now for sale.

A native of New York, White's occupation is listed as a union organizer. Police are seeking him for questioning. He is described as six feet tall, weighing 190 pounds, with brown hair and eyes.

Montgomery police interviewed an employe of Classic Cars, Pat Sherman, on Tuesday, but said he had been drinking, and that they were unable to gain any useful information from him regarding the car agency or its two owners, Carrafa and Knohl.

Sherman worked for the antique car dealers until the middle of July, when he was fired, and then disappeared until last weekend, ending the theory that he,

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too, may have become an underworld victim.

Carrafa and Knohl purchased the building in which Classic Cars is located from James Reid Edwards in March, 1975. At the time of purchase, they paid $50,000 in cash, and one year later made the final payment of another $7,000, according to records in Abingdon.

Just prior to Carrafa's last New York trip, three valuable antique cars, worth a reported $183,000, were stolen from the Abingdon agency on July 23. Police said Carrafa reported the stolen vehicles, and that they were insured.

Maryland State Police said Monday that the insurance policy on the cars was recently increased from $90,000 to $157,000. Police also confirmed that an insurance investigator has been assigned full time to the case.